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LITHUANIA

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MONOGRAPH OF LITHUANIA

INTRODUCTION

175
101 The Lithuania of to-day is situated between East Prussia, Poland and Latvia. In the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Lithuania was an independent State which, having conquered vast stretches of White Russia and Ukraine, extended from the Baltic to the Black Sea; her civilisation was that of Western Europe. At the close of the fourteenth century, Lithuania established with Poland a personal union, which was subsequently converted into a real union. For centuries, the conditions governing her existence were the same as for Poland. With the partition of 1795, practically the whole of ethnographical Lithuania was annexed by Russia, which ruled the territory until 1915.

A vast region inhabited by a population of Lithuanian origin and extending westwards almost as far as Marienburg had been conquered by the Germans in the tenth and twelfth centuries.

175
181 As long as Lithuania remained under the dominion of Russia, her economic and cultural level was conditioned by

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this circumstance and remained inferior to that of the more progressive countries of Western Europe. Most of her peasant farmers, who were not released from serfdom until 1862-1865, were still living under the same conditions as in the Middle Ages. They owned narrow strips of land, practised the old three-year crop rotation, had common grazing land in a very neglected condition, bred only native stock and relied almost exclusively on cereal crops. Farming methods were thus very primitive and the farmer's income very small, while the houses were almost entirely of wood with thatched or wooden roofs.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, intellectuals, who were still few in number, began to take an interest in rural life : they cut up part of the communal land to form separate farms, organised more paying forms of activity, carried on active propaganda for the improvement of rural dwellings and encouraged the introduction of more rational methods of work. Their efforts met invariably with systematic opposition from the Russian Government.

During the world war, Lithuania was for many months the scene of hostilities. From 1915 to the end of 1918, the Germans occupied the country, which was the victim of requisitions of all kinds and lost much of its wealth.

The Proclamation of Lithuanian independence was followed by a strong movement of national renaissance and rural reconstruction. The Government's task was a difficult one. Tremendous efforts were made to build up a country which was just emerging from war ; farming methods were improved and land reform was instituted. Communal land was redistributed, undeveloped estates were broken up, new branches of agriculture were developed — dairying, pig-breeding, poultry-farming ; numerous schools of agriculture were founded, such roads as existed were rebuilt, and new means of communication were opened. In a word, the farmer's life was to be reorganised on modern lines. True, not all these ideals have proved capable of fulfilment in so short a time ; but great strides have been made, and present day agriculture in Lithuania differs profoundly from the pre-war conditions obtaining in that country.

* * *

Lithuania now consists in the main of small and medium-sized rural properties. A farm of 5 or 6 hectares provides an adequate livelihood for an average working farmer's family. An estate of 80 or 100 hectares is also regarded as a working peasant's farm, as it is generally run by the owner in person. Farms ranging from 5 to 100 hectares account for over 90 % of the agricultural land. Miniature farms up to 2 hectares represent only 0.44 % of the area under cultivation, which is all

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to the good, as such farms generally contribute nothing towards agricultural production and are far from being a social asset. There are no latifundia in Lithuania. The largest estate comprises about 1,000 hectares, and the larger properties exceeding 100 hectares number only 1602, or 0.56% of the total farms.

The proportion of men and women in the rural population is about equal. The country people do not go to the towns in search of work, as urban and country dwellers carry on different trades and their lives are quite separate.

An old barn.

The soil is of average fertility. In the east and south-east, there is a small area which is sandy and not very fertile, while, in the north again, a small area consists of very fertile land. The vast plains of Lithuania are covered with clay — more or less light — deposited during the Ice Age and subjected to centuries of erosion and impoverishment.

The rainfall is fairly heavy, so that much of this low-lying land necessitates drainage works. The State makes itself responsible for the large-scale regularisation of rivers and watercourses and the cutting of drainage channels. The farmers are responsible, with the help of Government subsidies, for ditching and drain-laying on water-logged land. By no means all of the land is satisfactorily drained. The yield cannot

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242 therefore hope as yet to equal that of the more progressive countries of Western Europe, but it does exceed the average figure for Eastern Europe. The yield per hectare is 13-14 quintals for wheat and 12-13 quintals for barley and rye; the figure for oats is slightly below the figure for barley, owing to the havoc caused in recent years by rust.

241 Lithuania produces large quantities of cereals and pulse, a large part of which is, however, required for fodder. Forage is also obtained from wide areas of clover, meadowland and [233] pasture. Stock-breeding constitutes the principal agricultural activity : cattle, pigs, poultry. Lithuania used to be famous for her horses, which were exported in large numbers to Western Europe; now, however, there is very little export trade, and almost all the farm-work is done with horses.

Work in the fields generally begins in the second half of April and ends in about mid-November. The winter is long and farm work is concentrated in a relatively short period. The fact that the country is broken up into small farms, in conjunction with the low purchasing-power of the farmer, has prevented the mechanisation of agriculture on any very extensive scale. Cereals and pulse are generally machine-threshed, but most of the field-work is done by animal-drawn implements or by hand. There are a fair number of reapers, binders, seeders, hoers and other types of agricultural machinery, but these are employed only for part of the work; not all the peasant farmers are fortunate enough to possess them, so that a great deal must depend on human labour. This fact and the comparative shortness of the season means that the call for labour is greatest during the summer. Accordingly, a relatively large number of the population lives in the country and is intensively occupied during the season of work in the fields.

* * *

439 The economic structure of Lithuania has determined the character of her trade with Germany. Lithuania disposes of her surplus agricultural production on the international market (in 1938, 40% of her exports were absorbed by the United Kingdom, 26.8% by Germany, 5.7% by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, 4.5% by Belgium, etc.). Her imports consist mainly of manufactured products, including 33% from the United Kingdom, 24.4% from Germany, 6.7% from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, 4.7% from the Netherlands and 3.8% from Belgium.

In 1938, exports totalled 233 million litai and imports 223 millions. One half of the exports consisted of foodstuffs (122 million litai : including butter 48 millions, bacon 24 millions,

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fresh meat and poultry 13 millions, cereals about 20 millions and eggs 7.8 millions).

The total value of exports of raw materials and half-finished goods was 73.4 million litai. Exports of hemp and tow accounted for 25 million litai, cellulose for 12.7 millions and timber for 21 millions.

Among imports, manufactured products head the list (133 million litai, comprising machinery and tools, automobiles, chemical products, textiles and yarns, etc.), followed by raw materials and half-finished goods totalling 78.7 million litai (gilt metals, cement, chemical fertilisers, coal, naphtha and petroleum, cotton, etc.).

As long as the territory of Klaipéda (Memel) belonged to Lithuania, the foreign trade of the country passed almost exclusively through the Port of Klaipéda (Memel). Under the treaty concluded in March 1939 with Germany, Lithuania retains a free port at Klaipéda.

* * *

There has been a fairly big increase in population; rural families tend to be large. The women, though very fully occupied with their children and domestic duties, find time to look after the animals and work in the fields. This type of work is, however, more often left to women who have no children or domestic duties to attend to — that is, to girls or women whose children are older. Lithuanian women are, as a rule, fit and healthy; nevertheless, they are sometimes forced to neglect their homes, owing to the claims of agriculture and the rearing of children. They are naturally clean and orderly, and like to have a little garden of their own; in winter, they devote themselves to home industries — spinning, knitting, embroidery and sometimes weaving. The artistic value of a great deal of the handwork done in the country is of exhibition standard and has been shown both in Lithuania and abroad — for example, in 1937, at the Paris International Exhibition and, in 1938, at the Berlin International Exhibition of Arts and Crafts.

The Lithuanian peasant is somewhat deliberate in character; he is long-suffering and is prepared when necessary to go through difficult times without complaint. This was proved during the war, when, notwithstanding intense suffering, the popular songs and jokes dear to the peasant heart were never forgotten.

The rural population used formerly to wear homespun woollen and linen clothing — the production of flax is relatively greater in Lithuania than in any other European country. Of recent years, this type of clothing has disappeared, its place being taken by ready-made factory goods.

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292 The national costume, though little worn on ordinary occasions, is much in evidence on holidays and on festive occasions, particularly among the women.

342 241 Since the redistribution of the communal lands, the farms have all been scattered over the vast plain, at some distance from one another. Most of the buildings are of wood, as timber costs far less than masonry; the roofs are generally of thatch or wood, though quite often of iron or tiled. Most of the houses are fairly roomy, and even small peasant farmers have three or four rooms. The Lithuanian peasant does not live in a house under the same roof as the stables or other farm buildings, as is so often the case in Western and Southern Europe; he regards such an arrangement as inconvenient and unhealthy. There is generally a little orchard and vegetable garden near the house. The Lithuanian peasants do not plant orchards for commercial purposes; they grow fruit for their own requirements and very few of them sell their fruit on the home markets or for export.

184 The country being comparatively small in area, no great differences are noticeable between the types of farm or the peasants in different regions. Of recent years, the various means of communication, particularly motor-bus services, have improved, and this tends very largely to eliminate such differences as did exist between the various regions. Practically all the peasantry is Roman Catholic. Though dialects exist, peasants [212] from all parts of the country understand one another. For some years now, over half of them have been able to read the newspapers and to become familiar with the literary language; farming papers alone have a circulation of over 150,000, though the total number of farms does not exceed 290,000. From the point of view of nationality also, the Lithuanian peasantry constitutes a homogeneous mass. Lithuania does possess national minorities (about 18% of the population) but these consist mainly of urban dwellers, whereas the rural districts are populated almost exclusively by persons of Lithuanian race.

* * *

000 The Lithuanians have full confidence in the future. Always supposing that no restrictions are placed on their activities and that their territory is not once again turned into a battlefield, the exploitation of the natural riches of the country should proceed rapidly and on a comprehensive scale, while the living conditions of the rural population will improve correspondingly. This confidence in the future is justified by the very considerable progress already achieved during the brief period since Lithuania recovered her independence, progress which is explained by the attachment of country dwellers to the land and by their hard-working, intelligent and long-suffering character, and, lastly,

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by the fertile nature of their soil. The Lithuanian peasant does not expect and does not wish for help from abroad, knowing, as he does, that he is himself strong enough for any effort that the future may demand of him. He fears only one thing, the horrors of war and foreign invasion.

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I. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

162 Lithuania is essentially an agricultural country : the 1923 census showed that 76.7% of the inhabitants live in the rural areas and are occupied in agriculture. According to estimates [161] based on the most recent statistics, the total population on January 1st, 1938, was 2,549,668.

At the time of the agricultural census of 1930, the total [423] area (including forest and land not under cultivation) of the agricultural undertakings (287,380) with an area of over 1 hectare was 4,318,514 hectares. As no more recent data are available, it is impossible to calculate the exact density of the rural population or the extent of migration from the country to the [166] towns since 1923. It is, however, clear that, as a result of industrial developments, many landless agricultural labourers have settled in the towns in recent years.

342

A Lithuanian house.

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II. LAND TENURE AND AGRARIAN REFORM

When the Lithuanian State was revived in 1918, two-thirds of the land under peasant ownership consisted of holdings split up into a large number of separate strips and plots. (Detailed plans of villages before and after the subdivision of village lands into self-contained holdings are to be found in M. V. Balčiūnas' work *Lietuvos kaimų žemės tvarkymas istorijos, ūkio ir statistikos šviesoj*, published by the Central Land Office of the Ministry of Agriculture, Kaunas, 1938, pages 156 to 158.) At that time, moreover, almost every village had common pasture-land and much of the land was subject to servitudes in the form of pasture and forest rights. The peasants were entitled to pasture their stock on land belonging to the great landed estates and to receive a given quantity of wood from their forests.

In the early years of the country's independence, the Government took steps with a view to the consolidation of holdings, a process which entailed the subdivision of village lands into self-contained undertakings and the abolition of common pasture-lands and servitudes. Subdivision was required

Farm established in pursuance of agrarian reform.

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423 in some 9,600 villages with a total area of 1,974,000 hectares. By 1938, 6,096 villages, with a total area of 1,491,475 hectares, had actually been subdivided into 139,551 self-contained undertakings. Thus, 3,500 villages, with a total area of 516,500 hectares, have still to be subdivided, and it is expected that the process will be completed in from four to five years. In all the villages subdivided, the common pasture-lands have been abolished. Furthermore, servitudes have been done away with in regard to a total area of approximately 100,000 hectares; the owners of pasture rights received compensation in land and the owners of forest rights were compensated in land, trees or cash.

241 This consolidation of holdings freed the peasants of villages that had been subdivided from the necessity for a common system of crop rotation for the entire village, and more particularly the system of three-shift rotation, with its well-known drawbacks; this has greatly facilitated cultivation and other agricultural work, and has brought about a state of things more conducive to agricultural improvements, etc.

423 The consolidation of holdings was one of the two most important aspects of agrarian reform in Lithuania, the other being the provision, out of the big estates, of land for peasants who previously had none, and for small landowners who required more.

In the early days of independence, the distribution of the land as between the various types of agricultural undertaking was anomalous. While from a third to half of all the land in the country was in the hands of large landowners, many of the peasants, being unprovided, or insufficiently provided, with land, had no outlet for their activities and lacked a regular means of livelihood. According to the data collected in 1919 preparatory to the introduction of agrarian reform, there were, in round figures, 60,000 landless peasants and 40,000 smallholders who had applied for land. At the same time, the large estates could no longer be kept up, particularly in consequence of the serious losses suffered by their owners during the war, and were fated to give way to small and medium-sized undertakings (see the International Institute of Agriculture's publication, *La Réforme Agraire*, I, Rome, 1930, pages 58 and 59).

In pursuance of the agrarian reforms, some 35,000 new undertakings with a total area of 350,000 hectares were created out of the land belonging to the big estates and some 90,000 hectares were distributed among approximately 26,000 smallholders. (Land was also given to schools, various cultural and social organisations, etc.)

As a result, large numbers of agricultural labourers were raised from economic conditions which were truly deplorable to a position of independence in the country's economic life. In

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addition, the restoration of social peace in the rural areas brought about general conditions more conducive to an improvement in the rural population's standard of living. 423

It should further be mentioned that the Ministry of Agriculture has drafted a law regulating the ownership of land. The draft provides for certain minimum limits beyond which the subdivision of agricultural undertakings may not be carried (6 hectares of first-grade land, 9 hectares of second-grade land, 12 hectares of third-grade land and 18 hectares of fourth-grade land). The purpose of this measure is to prevent the unrestricted partition (on succession) and the alienation piecemeal of the small agricultural holdings of the rational type created on the occasion of the agrarian reform (creation of new undertakings and subdivision of village lands into self-contained holdings), so as to prevent the formation of enclaves, the subsequent elimination of which would be impossible.

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III. SOIL IMPROVEMENT AND AGRICULTURAL PROGRESS

647 The Ministry of Agriculture controls the organisation for
242 the encouragement of technical progress in agriculture, the aim
433 of which is to improve the conditions of existence of the agricultural classes. The Ministry is responsible for carrying out agrarian reform and agricultural improvements, schools of agriculture, the organisation and improvement of veterinary work and supervision of the export of agricultural produce, etc.

In addition to the Ministry, the Chamber of Agriculture (founded in 1927) is also active in agricultural development. It is in charge of all the forms of agricultural training not under the authority of the Ministry, including the agricultural intelligence service; it supervises and co-ordinates the activities of the stock-breeders' associations, the flax-growers' association, the sugar-beet-growers' association and other similar organisations; it also subsidises various agricultural organisations and individual agriculturists with a view to the promotion or improvement of some particular branch of agriculture, and organises agricultural shows, etc.

474 Working in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture
242 are various central organisations concerned with the processing
433 of agricultural produce, and its marketing abroad and at home, and with supplying to agriculturists all such goods as they may require. These organisations are: "Lietuvos Žemės Ūkio Kooperatyvų Sąjunga" ("Lithuanian Union of Agricultural Co-operative Societies"), abbreviated to "Lietūkis", "Centralinė Lietuvos Pieno Perdirbimo Bendrovių Sąjunga" ("Lithuanian Central Union of Dairymen's Co-operative Societies"), abbreviated to "Pienocentras", and the "Maistas" and "Lietuvos Cukrus" joint-stock companies.

The chief measures taken with a view to the improvement of agricultural production are the consolidation of holdings (see above), land drainage, the development of agricultural training (see under V) and agricultural research.

312 Systematic work on the drainage of agricultural land could not be begun until 1921. The Ministry of Agriculture is proceeding with the regularisation of the beds of streams and the cutting of dykes which enable agriculturists to drain waterlogged land completely by means of open ditches or drainage pipes. The total area of the land drained by means of dykes from 1921 to 1937 (inclusive) is approximately 416,000 hectares, or more than 10% of all the land used for agricultural purposes.

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As regards *agricultural research*, the Institute of Agricultural Research (founded in 1927) is in charge of experimental work in the field of agriculture throughout the country, with the exception of the work conducted by the Agricultural Academy at Dotnuva. It has at present under its control seven experimental stations dealing with various matters relating to the cultivation of crops, an experimental fruit-growing station (in process of organisation), a crop improvement station (at Dotnuva), a crop protection station (at Dotnuva) and a station for research on the breeding of pigs for bacon. Proposals are under consideration for the foundation of an agricultural machinery testing station and of stations for research into cattle- and sheep-breeding respectively. 242

In consequence of these measures, and particularly the activities of the agricultural intelligence service, agriculturists have begun to introduce a more rational system of crop rotation, to prepare the soil more carefully and fertilise it more rationally (the progress of stock-breeding increases the quantities of manure available), to use better quality seed, to improve meadow- and pasture-land, to make more extensive use of agricultural machinery (through the foundation of co-operative societies for the joint use of machinery), etc. The results have been a decrease in the area of land left fallow and a corresponding increase in the area sown from an average of 2,079,000 hectares for the years 1928 to 1930 to 2,312,000 hectares for the period 1935 to 1937, the increase chiefly affecting the land under the more intensively cultivated crops (wheat, sugar-beet, mangel-wurzels). There has also been an increase in the yield per hectare of all the principal crops (wheat, rye, barley, oats, peas and potatoes), the yield from 1933 to 1937 being almost half as great again as during the years 1901 to 1910. It is worthy of note that, whilst the cultivation of sugar-beet was entirely unknown in the country before the war, the refineries now pay out almost 6½ million litai to the growers each year. The productivity of meadow- and pasture-land has increased to an even greater extent than that of arable land. 311 241 433

This latter circumstance has permitted the development of stock-breeding and the number of farm animals has risen considerably (in the case of cattle, for example, from 766,000 in 1913 to 1,172,000 in 1937). As a result of the organisation of milk control societies, breeding centres, the keeping of stud books, etc., the productivity of stock has also increased very considerably. 233 433

Progress has been particularly noteworthy in the case of cattle (which, in Lithuania, are mainly bred for the production of milk). In [illegible], with a view to the transformation of surplus milk into exportable produce, chiefly butter, dairymen's co-operative societies were founded with the financial support 234 474 433

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of the Government. Since then, the dairy industry and the manufacture of butter have made rapid progress. In 1937, the 193 dairymen's co-operative societies, all of which are equipped with the most up-to-date machinery, supplied 420 million kilogrammes of milk — including that delivered to the 2,052 cream-separating centres — and produced 16.9 million kilogrammes of butter. Though, since the war, the population has increased by some 300,000 inhabitants, the consumption of dairy products per head is at present greater than before the war, and butter exports, which were formerly negligible, amounted in 1924 to 524 metric tons and in 1936/37 to 15,000 tons approximately.

Hand in hand with the development of the dairy industries has gone the development of pig-breeding (skim-milk is used for the fattening of young pigs). Not only has the number of pigs considerably increased (from 450,000 in 1913 to 1,192,000 in 1937), but the quality of the pigs (for the manufacture of bacon) has greatly improved. With the Government's financial support, a bacon export industry has been rapidly built up. In 1928, bacon exports amounted to 150 metric tons; in 1932, to more than 25,000 metric tons, and, in 1936/37 (being affected by the introduction of bacon import quotas in England), to more than 10,000 metric tons. These figures, together with those for the export of live pigs (in 1932, 34,000, and, in 1936/37, 125,000 approximately) and the number of pigs kept are proof of the progress made.

Poultry-keeping also has made considerable headway; more pure-bred poultry are being raised, and feeding and poultry-keeping technique have become more efficient. Horse-breeding likewise has improved, thus facilitating the sale of Lithuanian horses in foreign markets.

Such are the methods whereby the Ministry of Agriculture, the Chamber of Agriculture and the organisations working in conjunction with the latter are striving to improve the production both of crops and live-stock and to foster agricultural industries (dairy industries and the manufacture of bacon). Since 1931, the Chamber of Agriculture has also been endeavouring, with the co-operation of the Union of Young Farmers' Clubs, to rationalise and modernise home industries (weaving, knitting, fur-dressing, felt-making, pottery, furniture, etc.) and to improve the artistic qualities of the articles produced. Products of the home industries are thus enabled to compete with factory-produced goods.

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IV. ORGANISATION OF MARKETS

The action of the Government and of the central agricultural organisations with a view to the organisation of markets and the standardisation of agricultural products may be briefly summarised as follows :

To enable the small agricultural undertakings (which predominate in the country) to produce standardised agricultural products for foreign (and home) markets and to export in large quantities, the Government, even before the world depression, had taken steps to combine the small agriculturists into big central organisations (dealing both with production and marketing). The following three organisations were founded : (1) " Lietuvos Žemės Kooperatyvų Sąjunga " (Lithuanian Union of Agricultural Co-operative Societies), abbreviated to " Lietūkis ", which now centralises all cereal exports ; (2) " Centralinė Lietuvos Pienos Perdirbimo Bendrovių Sąjunga " (Lithuanian Central Union of Dairymen's Co-operative Societies), abbreviated to " Pienocentras ", which now centralises the production of butter for export and the export of butter and eggs ; (3) the " Maistas " joint-stock company (the shareholders being the State and the pig-breeders), which at present centralises the production of bacon and other meat preparations for export and also the export of the meat preparations, animals for slaughter and poultry. In 1930, a joint-stock company

Chamber of Agriculture at Kaunas.

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known as " Lietuvos Cukrus " was founded (the shareholders being the State and sugar-beet-growers), and this centralises all sugar manufacture.

To improve the quality of agricultural produce for export, the Government controls the export of meat (since 1925), butter (since 1927), eggs (since 1927), linseed (since 1925) and flax (since 1926, the control having been further tightened up in 1934). The centralisation of exports of agricultural produce greatly facilitates export control and increases its efficacy.

At the time of the fall in the prices of agricultural produce on foreign markets, the Government, to stimulate supplies for export, fixed minimum prices for the pigs bought by the " Maistas " company, the milk supplied to the dairymen's co-operative societies and cream-separating centres (all the dairymen's co-operative societies in the country are affiliated to the " Pienocentras "), the eggs bought by the " Pienocentras " and the cereals bought by the " Lietūkis ". In this way, agricultural prices have been maintained with the co-operation of the three central organisations.

Various measures have been adopted with a view to the reduction of costs of production. As long ago as 1933, the rate of interest on mortgage loans was lowered ; the total of the land taxes payable by agriculturists during the years 1935 and 1936 was reduced by 10%. Agriculturists leaving their villages and settling on self-contained undertakings are exempt from Government land taxes for a period of one year (this privilege is enjoyed by all agriculturists who have taken over separate undertakings since 1932). Agriculturists who, having taken over separate undertakings since 1932, are obliged to change their place of residence (and such is the case with more than half of those concerned) receive from the Ministry of Agriculture a stated quantity of wood at 20% of the normal sale price. Under the price-control system introduced in 1935, maximum prices have been fixed for chemical fertilisers, bran, feeding-cakes, petroleum and certain other articles which are of particular importance to agriculture. For the 1938 autumn sowings, the Government (in conjunction with the " Lietūkis ") has reduced the price of chemical fertilisers by itself paying the cost of railway transport.

In conclusion, it may be said that, in spite of the agricultural depression which made its appearance some five or six years ago and which has not yet entirely ceased, the Lithuanian agriculturist is at present in a better position than he was before the war ; he is better fed and better clothed and has more money to spare for his cultural needs.[1]

[1] A detailed description of the progress made in this sphere and of the activities of the institutions and organisations for the promotion of agriculture is to be found in the work entitled *Agriculture in Lithuania*, by Professor J. KRIKŠČIŪNAS, published by the Chamber of Agriculture, Kaunas, 1938.

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V. CO-OPERATION[1]

Co-operative thrift and loan societies of the modern type began to be organised in 1873 and, since their foundation, have greatly contributed to the increase of rural prosperity.

1. The importance of credit in rural life is well known. In the event of loss through fire, sickness among live-stock or bad crops, or on the partition of property between the various members of a family in case of succession, etc., the peasant was obliged to apply to a moneylender in the nearest market town — often the innkeeper — who would lend only on highly unfavourable terms, at a rate of interest rising in some cases to 300% represented by periodic payments in kind (grain, animals, etc.). Furthermore, the moneylender reserved to himself the exclusive right of purchasing his debtor's produce, so that the prices paid to the peasant were extremely low. As a result of these abuses, peasants frequently became insolvent and were evicted from their farms.

The creation of rural credit establishments permits of the organisation of agricultural credit on a fairer basis and in a manner more in keeping with agricultural requirements. The rate of interest is much lower. The peasant can dispose of his produce as he thinks fit and has less hesitation in borrowing for the improvement of his farm — *e.g.*, by purchasing up-to-date equipment, chemical fertilisers, better quality seed, breeding-stock, etc. The creation of rural credit co-operative societies also fosters his native thrift by encouraging him to invest his savings.

2. The peasants' trading co-operative societies — rural consumers' co-operative societies and purchasing and selling societies — which have grown up in Lithuania since 1880 and, above all, since the beginning of the twentieth century, have accustomed the peasants to the management of co-operative undertakings and have thus brought about great and beneficial changes in rural trading through the elimination of short weight, adulterated and low quality goods and, most important of all, by regularising prices. It used to be difficult for the peasants to obtain the articles necessary for the improvement of agricultural production — *e.g.*, chemical fertilisers, which were frequently adulterated by private dealers, better quality seeds,

[1] See the article on "La coopération agricole en Lithuanie" in the *Bulletin mensuel de renseignements économiques et sociaux*, No. 10, 1933, of the International Institute of Agriculture.

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474 agricultural machinery, etc. Without the co-operative societies, the acquisition of these indispensable articles would have been almost impossible. Machinery to facilitate the various processes of farming and tools by which the land could be more efficiently prepared were shown to peasants at exhibitions, conferences and practical demonstrations organised by the rural co-operative societies.

474 242 3. Before the war, when Lithuania was still part of Russia, it was only towards 1911 or 1912 that action to encourage technical progress in agriculture could be developed on anything like a wide scale. Before that date, and particularly since 1906, much had been done in this sphere by the co-operative organisations — agricultural societies and farmers' clubs. At the meetings held by these organisations, many questions relating to the improvement of agricultural production were discussed. Exhibitions, courses of instruction and lectures were regularly held and visits were organised to model farms, experimental stations and demonstrations of agricultural instruments; schools of agriculture were founded and journals were published. General questions of importance to agriculturists were also discussed — *e.g.*, the flight from the land, the problem of agricultural labour, means of transport, hygiene and social insurance.

4. Since the end of the nineteenth century, propaganda has been conducted for the development of stock-breeding, particularly for the purposes of the dairy industries, as a substitute for the corn-growing to which Lithuanian agriculturists used largely to confine themselves. This propaganda was directed, in the first instance, to the owners of large agricultural estates and was subsequently extended to the owners of medium and small holdings also.

474 [727] The valuable activities of the co-operative societies in this sphere were interrupted by the war, during which Lithuanian agriculture suffered greatly : there was a fall of 38% in the number of horses, 47% in cattle, 44% in pigs and 30% in sheep; approximately 35% of the arable land was lying fallow and 1,200 villages with 14,270 agricultural undertakings, 2,000 separate undertakings and fifty townships, comprising a total of 57,080 buildings, were destroyed. The independent State of Lithuania was raised from the ruins without any compensation being received for the losses suffered. The co-operative societies applied themselves to the revival of rural life. Henceforward, their activities were better organised, as they were allowed to form unions and were able to concern themselves with the most varied branches of rural life.

In 1918, only 10% of the co-operative societies in being before the war still remained, so that the network of societies had to be extended. In consequence, many new societies of

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the most varied types were founded. To the functions they already performed — provision of credit for agriculturists, supplying of consumption goods and agricultural requirements, encouragement of the use of selected seeds and pure-bred stock, co-operative manufacture of milk products — they added the purchase of agricultural produce and the organisation of its sale in foreign markets. Cereals, vegetables, potatoes, linseed, eggs, flax and other agricultural products were previously inadequately prepared both for home and for foreign markets, with the result that the prices received by the peasant were low. The co-operative societies have improved the marketing of agricultural produce; standards have been laid down

Co-operative dairy.

and are rigorously adhered to. The Government has also helped to regulate this aspect of rural life by the enactment of laws on the control of agricultural produce, the texts of which were prepared by the co-operative organisations themselves. These organisations have also given proof of initiative in organising and developing the export of cattle and pigs. At a time when the export of bacon and live animals could only be handled with difficulty by private enterprise, the unions of co-operative societies acquired a very extensive undertaking for the export of live-stock, developed it and subsequently made it over to the "Maistas" joint-stock company. This rendered possible the efficient export of meat and, more particularly, bacon and poultry.

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474 poultry. The same is true of the export of eggs, which has been taken over by a co-operative organisation (" Pienocentras ") and is increasing yearly.

Similarly, without the activities of co-operative organisations, the efforts of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Chamber of Agriculture to increase rural prosperity would not have been so rich in results.

The co-operative societies create more favourable conditions for the agriculturists' activities; they facilitate rational production and enable agriculturists to obtain the necessary supplies on more favourable terms. In consequence, the income of the agricultural classes has been increased and their cultural level raised.

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VI. AGRICULTURAL CREDIT AND AGRICULTURAL INSURANCE

Agricultural credit may be divided as follows, according to the term of the loan and the conditions of payment : 452 [452]

1. Indebtedness to the Ministry of Agriculture for land obtained from the Agrarian Fund, timber purchased, agricultural improvements and the reintegration of land. These are long-term debts ; in some cases, no interest is charged ; in others, interest at 3% per annum.

2. Loans on mortgage are granted to agriculturists almost exclusively by the Agrarian (Land) Bank. Up to 1934, the Bank granted mortgage loans in cash only ; since that year, it has granted mortgage bonds, of variable duration, up to twenty-eight years. The rate of interest is from 3.6% to 4.5%. On January 3rd, 1938, mortgage bonds (4%) were quoted on the Kaunas Exchange at 92.9.

3. Loans granted by the credit co-operatives. The term varies from six to eighteen months ; the loans may be extended for a single period of six months. The maximum loan that may be granted to agriculturists is 5,000 litai. The interest is from 6% to 8%. The credit co-operatives sometimes grant loans against promissory notes, but more usually against recognisances, two or more agriculturists being required to stand surety. The recognisance differs from the promissory note in the following respects : It is exempt from stamp duty ; the duration of the loan may be extended without the necessity for a new recognisance, simply by means of a note on the original recognisance. If the loan is not paid on the due date, there is no need for a protest ; it is recovered by the police, in accordance with a simplified procedure.

4. Loans granted by short-term credit establishments organised as joint-stock companies or mutual credit societies. These credit establishments serve the needs of commerce and industry ; agriculturists only occasionally apply to them for loans. They grant loans to farmers for three to six months at 8%.

The following table shows the indebtedness of Lithuanian farmers at January 1st, 1938 :

	Number of loans	Amount of loans in litai (1 litas = $ 0.592 on September 30th, 1938)
I. Ministry of Agriculture . . .	122,994	71,239,000
II. Loans on mortgage	28,818	114,530,000
III. Credit co-operatives	82,713	55,052,600
IV. Commercial banks	9,727	6,847,000
	244,252	247,658,600

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452 The number of loans granted by credit establishments (groups 2-4) is 121,258. Many agriculturists have obtained loans from the three groups of establishments. The number of agriculturists who have obtained loans is therefore less than the actual number of loans. Only 30% of the Lithuanian agriculturists have contracted loans with credit establishments. The area of land mortgaged to the Agrarian Bank is 607,000 hectares. It is usually the larger landowners who apply for loans to the Agrarian Bank.

426 Doubtless farmers have also contracted debts with private individuals, but there is no statistical record of these. According to custom, the eldest son pays over a portion to each of his brothers and sisters and keeps the farm himself. As a rule, the farmer has no ready money and undertakes to pay these portions by fixed instalments ; the farm thus becomes heavily encumbered.

During the economic depression, the farmers were unable to meet their obligations, owing to the drop in agricultural prices ; the Government therefore came to their assistance.

In 1932, a list was drawn up of non-distrainable live-stock belonging to landowners. Farmers were protected from the forced sale of their farms by auction on account of debts contracted before February 1st, 1934, with private credit establishments or individuals. Where debts did not exceed 90% of the value of the agricultural immovable property, they had the right to apply to the competent court to suspend forced sale by auction. The court could do so for a year and a-half, to enable the debtor to come to an agreement with his creditors. Farmers were given facilities for repaying their debts to private persons in the form of mortgage bonds repayable by the Agrarian Bank at their nominal value. With this object, the Agrarian Bank issued a series of bonds, quoted at a fairly low rate on the Kaunas Exchange (78). Farmers could thus not only apply to the Agrarian Bank for loans in the form of mortgage bonds but also could purchase mortgage bonds on the market at a low rate, with which they were able to repay their debts to private individuals (but not their debts to the State or to credit establishments).

According to the provisions now in force, the courts may also decide as to the extension of the time-limit for the repayment of farmers' promissory notes.

Farms may only be sold by auction provided the highest bid is not less than 50% of their value. The value of the farm is assessed by the " viršaitis " (chairman of the executive of the municipality) or by the bailiff, in cases of forced sale.

Where the farmer has to pay over shares under the terms of a will or donation, he need only pay 60% in cash if the obligation arose before January 1st, 1931, or 70% if it arose prior to the period December 31st, 1930, to December 31st, 1932.

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From 1921 to 1923, insurance of farms against fire was compulsory; this system was never generally accepted, and efforts are now being made to promote voluntary insurance. Those insuring are granted as favourable rates as possible. Fire insurance in rural areas is almost entirely in the hands of the State insurance establishment and the " Kooperacija ", the central insurance union. With a view to extending fire insurance in rural districts, steps are being taken to organise mutual insurance societies. 456

Under the Law of March 30th, 1938, the Ministry of the Interior was assigned a fund for grants in compensation for damage caused by natural disasters; 4% of the revenue from the Government land tax is earmarked each year for this fund.

The following grants are made out of the fund to victims of disasters :

(*a*) For damage caused to crops by hail, a sum proportionate to the damage, less 30% (which is regarded as the farmer's own risk);

(*b*) For damage caused by storms, 70% of the value of the buildings destroyed, provided these are necessary for the work of the farm;

(*c*) 70% of the value of live-stock killed by lightning or by the collapse of buildings, payable to the farmer.

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VII. EDUCATION — GENERAL, AGRICULTURAL AND HOUSECRAFT

872 Compulsory elementary education was gradually introduced between 1928 and 1931.

At present, elementary schools are divided into two grades. The first grade, which consists of four standards, is compulsory for children from 7 to 13 years of age. The second grade, consisting of two standards, is intended for children between the ages of 14 and 15 who have passed through the first grade; attendance is not as yet compulsory.

(In the Klaipéda territory attendance for six years at an elementary school is obligatory.)

To meet the needs of peasants on isolated farms, schools consist, as a rule, of only one or two class-rooms; those in the chief towns have from four to six rooms. The network of schools is organised in such a way that no child ever has to go more than 4 kilometres to get to school.

[875] The teachers are trained at the training colleges and at the Pedagogic Institute. Qualified students of the training colleges may proceed to higher educational establishments (the university). The Pedagogic Institute has a two-years course for students who have completed the grammar school or training college curriculum. The teachers are officials, paid by the State. The municipalities provide them lodging, heating and lighting or a cash equivalent.

The progress in elementary education since before the war is illustrated by the increase in the number of schools and of pupils. In 1913, there were 875 elementary schools in Lithuania, with 51,221 pupils; in 1919, there were 1,036 schools, with 45,540 pupils, and in 1938, 2,319 schools, with 283,773 pupils and 5,110 teachers. During the early years of Lithuanian independence, when the Government set about organising education on lines in keeping with the national aspirations, there was a shortage of qualified teachers and of school-buildings. In 1913, out of the 875 elementary schools in existence in the territory which now constitutes Lithuania, only 360 had their own premises, and some of these buildings were destroyed during the war.

874 Adult education is provided by the people's universities and by evening classes held at the elementary schools.

212 There is a steady decline in the number of illiterate persons in rural districts, and there are practically no illiterate young people.

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Agricultural education and agricultural domestic education may be subdivided as follows : 874

(1) Higher education : (*a*) The Agricultural Academy at Dotnuva, with three sections : husbandry, agricultural domestic economy and forestry; (*b*) The Veterinary Academy;

(2) Middle-grade education : special agricultural middle-grade schools;

(3) Elementary education : agricultural elementary schools (mixed schools, agricultural domestic economy schools for girls), agricultural winter schools;

(4) Other forms of educational activity : young farmers' clubs, courses and lectures for adults, Press propaganda.

The Agricultural Academy at Dotnuva trains teachers qualifying for posts in agricultural schools, directors of agricultural experimental stations and experts for the Central Administration and external services of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Chamber of Agriculture.

The middle-grade schools provide technical staff for agriculture : zootechnicians (one school), dairy experts (one school), surveyors and agricultural improvement experts (one school), forestry experts (one school); horticulturists are trained at an elementary school of horticulture.

The aim of the agricultural elementary schools is to turn out efficient farmers and housewives. They accept boys and girls of 15 or over, who must have completed the elementary school course (four standards). The agricultural course lasts two years. The theoretical instruction given in the school is supplemented by practical work in the laboratories and on the attached farms. Girls work in the kitchen, laundry, cowsheds, etc. At present, there are ten agricultural elementary schools (nine mixed and one for boys only), and eight private agricultural domestic economy schools for girls, subsidised by the Ministry of Agriculture. During the school year 1937/38, the number of pupils in these agricultural elementary schools was 1,129 (516 boys and 613 girls), the figure for agricultural domestic economy schools being 375.

Agricultural winter schools are organised for young farmers who are already running a farm or intend to do so when they have completed their training. The teaching covers the rudiments of agriculture. It lasts from November 1st to April 1st, when work in the fields is suspended. Those applying must be not less than 17 years of age and be able to read and write. In 1937, there were twenty winter agricultural schools — *i.e.*,

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874 fourteen run by the Chamber of Agriculture and six by private persons in receipt of grants from the Chamber. From 1928 to 1937 — the first schools of this kind having been established in 1927 — 2,471 male and female students attended these winter schools, which have become centres for the propagation of agricultural knowledge. They are provided with small agricultural libraries and a supply of agricultural machinery and tools. They also give advice and instruction to farmers, etc.

From 1924 to 1933, agricultural classes were organised at the elementary schools (first by the Ministry of Agriculture, and after 1928 by the Chamber of Agriculture). The instruction was given in premises belonging to the schools, in the afternoons during the winter months, the classes being attended, not only by young people, but also by adult farmers. The teaching was in the hands of elementary-school teachers who had followed special agricultural courses. The 1,175 agricultural classes held during this period were attended by 10,281 persons.

874 883 In 1930, the first young farmers' clubs were organised on the lines of the American "4-H Clubs", with the object of encouraging a liking for agriculture among young people, teaching them how to apply agricultural science on their farms, imbuing them with a desire to work and to co-operate with each other, encouraging thrift, and exalting a love of their fellow citizens, their native land and liberty.

By a law of 1936, these young farmers' clubs were formed into a Union, under the patronage of the President of the Republic. They keep in close touch with the Chamber of Agriculture and are assisted by the latter's agricultural experts. Close relations are also maintained with the Ministry of Education. The clubs generally meet at the elementary schools, and most of them are run by the teachers. They receive financial assistance from the Government and from private organisations, particularly the co-operatives.

Boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 20 are admitted as members of these clubs. They are given various jobs to do — looking after poultry or pigs, growing vegetables, planting and attending to fruit-trees, etc. When the work is completed, the clubs organise exhibitions of the products, and prizes are awarded. Various competitions are also organised — for the best plantations of trees, small gardens, flowers, housewifery, cleanliness, etc.

In winter, the members attend agricultural and domestic economy courses, do manual work, etc. The clubs organise entertainments and excursions. Of recent years, they have paid more attention to physical culture and sport. They have small libraries.

At present, there are 1,087 of these clubs, with a membership of 36,020 (20,406 boys and 15,614 girls).

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The popularisation of agriculture by means of adult courses and lectures plays an important part in the scheme of agricultural and domestic education. Until 1927, the courses and lectures were organised and subsidised by the Ministry of Agriculture; since that date, they have been taken over by the Chamber of Agriculture. Between 1928 and 1937, the Chamber organised 19,459 lectures on various agricultural questions in 12,824 towns and villages, attended by 379,700 agriculturists; 1,117 lectures on various agricultural questions, organised for farmers' sons serving with the forces, were attended by 170,000 men. Between 1928 and 1937, 4,198 courses, lasting from three to six days and attended by 853,600 agriculturists, were given by agricultural experts, doctors, veterinary surgeons, forestry experts, etc. A large number of courses are organised on the feeding and care of live-stock, milking, flax-scotching and the secondary branches of agriculture (poultry-keeping, bee-keeping, horticulture).

Altogether, approximately one and a-half million agriculturists have passed through the agricultural schools up to date or attended courses or lectures. Out of the 300,000 farms, there is not one from which several inmates have not gone to an agricultural school or attended courses or lectures. In addition, agricultural lectures are broadcast regularly.

Since 1928, the Chamber of Agriculture has organised lectures and domestic economy courses for farmers' wives and peasant girls, given for the most part by the agricultural domestic economy advisers attached to the Chamber. There are general and special courses. The former last either from one to three months or from two to three weeks. The following subjects are included : preparation of food, housewifery, laundry, hygiene and the care of children. The courses lasting from one to three months also include sewing, manual work, horticulture, bee-keeping, poultry-keeping, care of live-stock, co-operation, etc. At the special courses (from three to fifteen days), instruction is given in one of these subjects, according to the time of year and local circumstances. No charge is made for the courses, which are held at the farms or in the elementary schools. Between 1928 and 1937, upwards of 75,000 farmers' wives and peasant girls attended housewifery courses. Lectures on household management are also broadcast from time to time.

The Chamber of Agriculture organises domestic economy exhibitions and excursions to enable farmers' wives to visit model farms, interesting undertakings, etc.

The agricultural Press plays an important part in popularising agriculture. The Chamber of Commerce issues a weekly review, *Ūkininko Patarėjas* (*The Peasant's Adviser*), with two supplements : *Jaunasis Ūkininkas* (the organ of the Union of Young Farmers' Clubs) and *Šeimininkė* (for farmers' wives).

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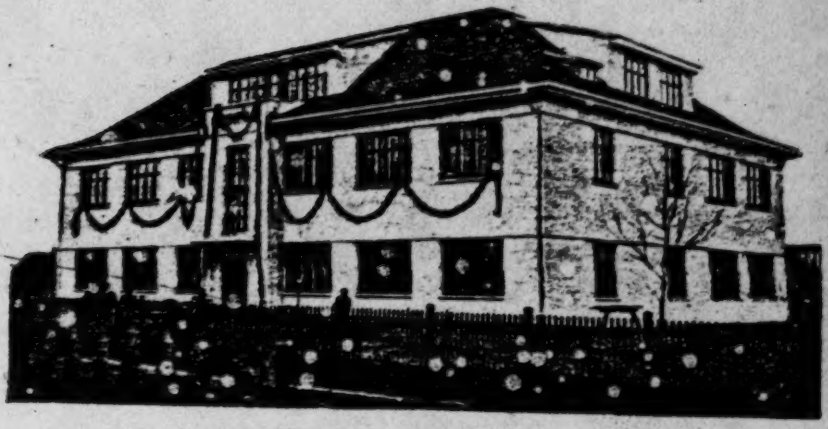
[204] 874 This review has a circulation of about 80,000. There are also three weekly reviews for agriculturists : *Lieluvos Ūkininkas*, *Ūkininkas* and *Mųsų Laikraštis*, all with a large circulation.

Lastly, agricultural experts and other technicians in the service of the Chamber of Agriculture give farmers and their wives advice and practical instruction in all branches of agriculture and agricultural domestic economy (including the care of children).



Primary school at Kvėdarna.

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VIII. THE ROLE OF LITHUANIAN WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

Women play an important part in Lithuanian agriculture both economically and intellectually. A farm without a woman is considered as extraordinary; the first thing a young peasant does when he comes into property is to marry, and a widower soon marries again. 462

From time immemorial, the peasant woman has taken her full share of responsibility in rural work. Though not on such a big scale as at present, she always made butter and cheese, collected eggs and occasionally fattened a pig for the market and sold a few geese. The more skilled even contrived to sell a little honey, dried fruits, poppy-heads and onions, and used to take to the fair in the neighbouring town their homespun linen or cloth. The woman's modest earnings were independent of the revenue from the farm; they covered the housekeeping expenditure and enabled her to put a little aside and even to help her husband on occasion.

In a number of districts, the ancient custom still prevails whereby a girl could reject a suitor who did not promise to confer on her, as mistress of his house, the right to manage the whole financial side of the farm.

Legally, women are treated in Lithuania to-day on a footing of equality with men. They have the right to own and administer land or other immovable property whether married or not. After the parents' death, brothers and sisters inherit the land in equal shares; the widow or widower inherits 25% of the estate. No statistics are available of the number of women landowners, but they are known to be less numerous than the men. The principal reason for this is the desire to avoid breaking up estates. One very widespread custom in many districts is for the peasant to leave his land to his eldest son, requiring him at the same time to pay over to his sisters and younger brothers in cash or in stock the shares devolving on them. When a girl marries, the share accruing to her is often registered in her husband's name. Before the war, under the law of the Russian Empire, girls in the Province of Kaunas inherited only one-fourteenth of the immovable property. These various factors have all tended to reduce the area owned by women. It is among the owners of large estates that women constitute the highest percentage, but these estates are few in number. 562 428

When an agricultural census was taken in 1930, women were found to constitute 50.69% and men 49.31% of the total adult 162

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162 workers permanently employed in farming. Despite the fairly considerable increase in population, the number of rural inhabitants shows a downward tendency, the drop in the case of women being greater than in that of men. The figures for men and women engaged in farmwork in 1923 and 1930 respectively were as followed.

	Women	Men
1923	594,479	535,392
1930	489,566	501,489

462 Women are making energetic efforts to obtain employment in industry, being more attracted than men by urban life. 464 Those who are prepared to spend their life in domestic occupations remain on the farms, while the daughters of landless parents and large families count on finding less strenuous work in the towns. They enlist in industry or domestic service or in other branches. This circumstance, together with the fact that agricultural undertakings in Lithuania consist mainly of average-sized and small farms worked by the owners themselves, explains the exceptionally low percentage of hired female labour found 464 in agriculture. The figures for male wage-earners are slightly higher, but men too are attracted by the easier methods of 162 earning a livelihood in other branches. The agricultural census of 1930 gave the following figures for workers permanently employed in farming :

	Women	%	Men	%
Members of farmers' families	418,010	42.17	419,509	42.32
Wage-earners	71,556	7.22	82,208	8.29

Thus, 85 % of the population employed in farming consists of members of the family and only 15 % of wage-earners. Both categories include a certain number over fifteen years of age. In 1930, these constituted 12.29 % of the total number of agricultural workers, the percentages being as follows :

	Boys %	Girls %
Members of the family	39.81	31.42
Wage-earners	20.06	8.71

464 The introduction of six standards in the elementary schools and the increase in the number of agricultural and domestic economy schools are responsible for a big drop in the number of children in receipt of wages. For the most part, they work only in summer on their parents' farms.

The small number of girls in receipt of wages in large families — which are more common than not — in the country is

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worthy of note. The explanation is that the elder daughters have to help their mothers in the house. Moreover, there is more demand for boys on the smaller farms; an adult paid hand would cost too much.

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The distribution of women's work according to the size of the farm is as follows: on the smaller farms — under 15 hectares — there are more adult women than men working who are members of the family; on farms ranging from 15 to 30 hectares paid labour is generally found consisting of adult women and boys, the number of women members of the family working being about the same as that of the men. The number of children working as members of the family is in inverse ratio to the size of the farm, the figures for boys declining rather more sharply than those for girls. In farms of 50 hectares, the percentage of women in receipt of wages becomes equal to the percentage of women belonging to the family, whereas in larger farms the former percentage is the greater. In farms of over 50 hectares, the proportion of women among the wage-earners declines in inverse ratio to the size of the farm.

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Wage-earning female agricultural workers are recruited from among the landless proletariat, which is not very numerous in the rural districts, and more particularly from among families of small landowners and settlers. Many of them are engaged only in seasonal day-labour and live at home.

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A woman's work on the farm is very varied. In addition to her usual domestic duties, she has to feed the fowls, milk and often feed the cows and work in the kitchen garden — all tasks for which men as a rule show little inclination. She has, besides, to toss the hay, load the carts, bind the sheaves, pick the flax, etc. Sugar-beet cultivation and other hoed crops require much female labour. With the modernisation of agriculture, dairying, pig-breeding and poultry are tending to constitute more important branches of agriculture, and practically the whole of the export trade in eggs, butter and bacon represents the outcome of women's work.

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The life of the peasant woman is becoming increasingly difficult, for even though her labour raises the standard of well-being of her own family and of the country as a whole, she is gradually losing part of her economic independence. The income she derived before the war from her eggs, cheese and butter is passing out of her keeping and her husband now receives, through the intermediary of the co-operative dairies, pig-marketing boards and centres for the purchase of flax and eggs, ten times the sum she once earned, this income forming the mainstay of the whole farm budget. A thrifty hard-working housewife who has to be constantly begging her husband for money for minor household expenses is criticied for extravagance.

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With so much other work to do, the farmer's wife has little time nowadays for spinning and weaving. This is indeed how her artistic sense, cultivated for centuries, finds expression. There is a special material for every purpose and a special design for every material — for bed-linen and personal linen, pure linen weave; for towels and table linen, linen and cotton mixed, with hundreds of combinations of grey and white checks; for carpets and blankets, linen and woollen materials in brighter colours and bolder designs; for men's suits, woollen materials. The women's traditional costumes are still found in many districts, and attempts have recently been made to extend the use of national costumes in general. Every corner of Lithuania has its own traditions, designs and combinations of colours. The designs of the costumes bear witness to an original taste in art, while the choice of colours is remarkably finely conceived. Again, a great variety of exquisite detailed designs is found in the Easter eggs. Only the son of a Lithuanian woman who had grown up in an atmosphere of mystic legends could have created the Lithuanian "Smūtkelis". the saints in the little chapels standing by the roadside, the amazing Samogitian crosses.

To recall the situation of the country before the war is to realise the importance of the humble peasant woman's rôle. During foreign domination when there were practically no books written in the national language and no Lithuanian schools, the peasant woman was the guardian of the Lithuanian language, customs and art and the inspirer of the national conscience when her sons returned home for the holidays after studying at schools which offered them only the foreign culture of the country's oppressors. The Lithuanian woman's personal beliefs and convictions revealed her integrity and sense of justice. A gentle poetry and original philosophy of life imbued the songs and tales and proverbs which she transmitted to her children. The lore she handed down to her daughters, her simple replies to their questions, reflected an exquisite beauty of character and the finest intelligence. Her bearing was marked by nobility, by a consciousness of her dignity, far above what might be regarded as corresponding to her station in life; in her relations with different classes of society, she exhibited remarkable tact and a keen sense of diplomacy.

The Lithuanian peasant woman has preserved this natural dignity notwithstanding the profound transformation of the whole life of the country. The school with its army of teachers — about 60% are women — the Lithuanian book, the national Press adapted to the requirements of the various social classes, officials and private economic and cultural activities, the agrarian reform, the breaking-up of communal lands into individual

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farms, improved means of communication, the wireless — all these factors have completely revolutionised the physiognomy of the country and the mentality of its inhabitants. 562

The rôle of the intellectual woman in agriculture is no less important. As a member of the Chamber of Agriculture or of the many associations which aim at promoting the technical advancement of agriculture, as the owner and manager of well-run farms, she takes an active part in the solution of various problems relating to agriculture. Like men, she is found in the service of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Chamber of Agriculture. But it is in the sphere of agricultural instruction that she plays the most important part. Girls have opportunities of studying agronomic science at the Agricultural Academy at Dotnuva, and agricultural domestic economy is taught in the domestic science section of that institution. On completing their studies, they spread the knowledge they have acquired by enrolling as teachers in domestic economy and other agricultural schools; they visit the peasant women in their own homes, in their capacity as agricultural domestic advisers under the Chamber of Agriculture; they give them advice and practical instruction; they organise lectures and courses on questions of interest to farming women, competitions, excursions and local exhibitions; they run young peasants' clubs and play an important part in organisations for the education of rural youth; they contribute to the periodicals for farmers' wives and daughters — "Šeimininkė" (with about 80,000 subscribers), "Jaunasis Ūkininkas" (also with about 80,000 subscribers) and "Moteris" (15,000 subscribers). They prepare lectures, etc., for the half-hour wireless talk for countrywomen. 462

The recently founded Society of Lithuanian Peasant Women looks after the interests of peasant women. Its object is to group all Lithuanian peasant women, including those working on farms, with a view to joint economic action designed to create a new type not concerned solely with their own individual calling but prepared to interest themselves also in the well-being of the nation as a whole. The Society of Lithuanian Peasant Women has an hour's talk on the radio every Sunday, devoted exclusively to the affairs of women in rural areas. 562 575

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IX. PEASANT ART AND FOLKLORE. ORGANISATION OF LEISURE

532 From time immemorial, the villagers have been fond of manual work. By the roadside, religious monuments decorated with original designs may be seen, such as crosses and chapels; in the villages, wooden churches and belfries and attractive wooden buildings, with original carvings, have been erected.

[415] In the houses themselves, the equipment and the domestic utensils are also made by hand. Furniture, spindles, linen-beaters, towel-pegs, nut-crackers are characteristic objects of peasant art. The girls were always fond of spinning, weaving and [258] knitting. When they married, they brought with them from their home a generous supply of cloth, towels, table-cloths, bed-covers, gaily coloured dresses, etc. At weddings, in particular, it was the custom to make presents of belts, towels, cloth, etc.

Crucifix.

After the world war, when Lithuania became independent, the cultural level rose; the old articles of peasant art, with their primitive forms, no longer fulfilled modern requirements. The Chamber of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Union of Young Farmers' Clubs, accordingly endeavoured to encourage cottage handicrafts, adapting them to modern conditions.

A series of courses was organised for peasant craftsmen, to teach them new methods and familiarise them with modern tools, better raw materials and modern shapes (for which artists prepared designs based on the traditional peasant styles.

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The Chamber of Agriculture is conducting systematic propaganda to disseminate the new peasant art among the population; books and articles are published, talks broadcast, exhibitions organised, sample designs popularised, etc. The chief publications of the Chamber of Agriculture are the *Sodžiaus Menas* (peasant art) series, six volumes of which (5,000 copies each) have been published up to date, containing descriptions of peasant art with illustrations, and the *Sodžiaus Pramonė* (peasant industries) series, three volumes of which have appeared containing descriptions and examples of new peasant work. 532

Thanks to these measures, the wearing of the national dress and the tendency to give an original national character to house interiors has become more widespread and there has been a real revival of national peasant art.

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The folklore is rich and varied. The popular songs (" Dainos ") have lost none of their freshness. It is over a century since special interest was first taken in them and steps were taken to collect them; about 150,000 variants of these popular songs have now been collected. 533

The genre most frequently found is the ballad, a simple, sincere and artless recital about a youth and a maiden; the relations between the members of the family are depicted with real delicacy and feeling — the daily joys and sorrows and conflicts of parents and children, brother and sister, husband and wife. Among the ceremonial songs, nuptial songs are very frequent. Wedding celebrations, which used to last a week, formerly followed an elaborate ceremonial, including songs, speeches, laments and dramatic dialogues. In all these songs, the difference is stressed between the life of the unmarried girl and that of the married woman, the former being described as happy and carefree, while the latter is depicted in more sombre colours. Working songs are also numerous; some are primitive, as regards both the words and the air. The songs about the rye harvest and the " harvest home " also occupy an important place. Part-songs *(sulaikinės)* are sung by two, three or four women's voices; one begins, and another joins in with the same or a related melody. This original and popular form of singing, of very ancient origin, is now dying out.

The ancient popular instrumental music, played on the " kanklės " (a kind of cither) and on the " skudučiai " (pipe), was very much on the lines of the part-singing.

The latter was accompanied by dancing. The traditional dances and games were not performed in couples but in groups, in the form of slow walks accompanied by singing but not

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Harvest festival.

533 A number of songs are characterised by their dramatic quality; ballads in which the love element predominates are commonly preferred to those dealing with violent and terrible happenings.

The melodies of these popular songs — except when influenced by individual art — are simple and sincere; their gaiety is subdued, their melancholy marked by tenderness. The rhythm is seldom lively and the expression of feeling is never violent. Both music and poetry reflect a peaceful state of mind.

538 There is a wealth of tales and legends influenced mainly by Eastern Europe; some contain authentic Scandinavian elements. The most popular legends are those about the dead, fairies, the devil and witches; short interpolations of song are often found.

The love of fairies and the supernatural persists, though the belief in them has died out. The number of anecdotes, proverbs and riddles found bears witness to an ingenious turn of mind and a sense of humour.

The popular games contain all the elements of natural and healthy sport, and an endeavour is now being made to adapt them to modern requirements.

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There are large peasant youth organisations such as "Jaunoji Lietuva", the Rifle Association, "Pavasaris", etc. The Chamber of Physical Culture has drawn up a programme of physical culture and sport for the peasant youth, which also takes account of their less material needs. The programme is divided into two parts, one for winter and one for summer. It includes games, exercises in self-defence, light exercise, popular dances and community games, running, jumping, throwing, ball games, more strenuous competitions, wrestling, riding, hiking, swimming and winter sports.

The Chamber of Physical Culture has introduced a national physical culture badge, which is conferred on young people in the camps held by the different organisations, after they have had adequate time to train for it.

A sculptor of religious statuettes.

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X. MEDICO-SOCIAL POLICY

744 657 758 Sanitary conditions in the towns and rural administrative areas are under the supervision of the competent district medical officer, who also inspects sales of foodstuffs. He is responsible for measures for the prevention of infectious diseases and for seeing that all persons suffering from venereal disease receive treatment.

It has not yet been possible to apply all the recommendations of the 1931 European Conference on Rural Hygiene. Health centres had already been set up (different from those recommended by the Conference) in 1929, before the Conference met. They are staffed by doctors, nurses and midwives, and advise pregnant women and mothers. The responsibility for establishing them rests with the Department of Labour and Social Insurance (Ministry of the Interior), which acts through the Union of Maternity and Child Welfare Organisations. There are at present twenty-two such health centres.

In 1938, 210 health stations were opened, each serving an area with an average of 10,000 inhabitants. Every health station has a medical officer and a midwife, the former being responsible for giving medical assistance to the inhabitants and for supervising the health of school-children. The stations are maintained jointly by the Ministry of the Interior and the municipalities. The doctors and midwives are paid a small fixed salary, and also receive reduced rate fees from their patients. Indigent persons are given free medical and obstetrical assistance. Persons suffering from venereal disease are treated free of charge by the doctor attached to the health station.

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XI. RURAL NUTRITION

According to researches carried out by Professor Vl. Lašas, 146
of the Institute of Physiology at Kaunas University, the peasant's diet is made up as follows (see table).

Vegetable proteins constitute 65% and animal proteins 35% of the total proteins consumed by the peasant. The sources of these proteins are : cereals 47%, potatoes 16%, vegetables and fruits 2%, meat 14% and dairy produce 21%.

Animal fats form 85% and vegetable fats 15% of the peasant's daily fat ration ; 48% of the fat content of the food consumed is derived from meat, 37% from dairy produce, 13% from cereals and 2% from potatoes, vegetables and fruits.

Carbohydrates are almost entirely of vegetable origin (96%) ; 60% of the carbohydrate content of the food consumed is derived from cereals, 32% from potatoes, 2% from vegetables and fruits, 2.6% from sugar and honey and 3.4% from milk.

Of the calorie content of the food consumed, 13.6% is derived from proteins, 16.4% from fats and 70% from carbohydrates. The sources, according to the foodstuffs from which the calories are derived, are : cereals 50%, potatoes 25%, vegetables and fruits 1.5%, sugar 2%, meat 10%, dairy produce 11.5%.

The peasant consumes 127.6 grammes of proteins daily, an amount which is adequate.

His daily caloric ration is also adequate — *i.e.*, 3,861 gross or 3,479 net. His diet contains 657.8 grammes of carbohydrates and 68.7 grammes of fats — *i.e.*, a proportion of 9.5 to 1. In view of climatic and labour conditions, the proportion might with advantage be slightly modified, so as to increase the fat ration.

As the peasant sells fats in the form of milk, butter and pigs, he does not consume them, so that his intake of fat-soluble vitamins is very small.

The peasant's daily intake of vitamin D (anti-rachitic) is 2.38 milligrammes ; of vitamin A (anti-xerophthalmic), 5,990 international units ; of vitamin C (anti-scorbutic), 129 milligrammes ; and of vitamin B (anti-neuritic), 1,051 international units. His daily ration is therefore quite adequate so far as vitamins B, C, and A are concerned, but his vitamin-D intake is insufficient.

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XII. RURAL PLANNING

491 Before the war, only rudimentary means of communication existed. During the hostilities, transport conditions became even worse : the main roads were broken up and the by-roads suffered serious damage. When Lithuania became independent, all the existing roads had to be rebuilt and new means of communication to be provided. Between 1918 and 1937, over 1,000 kilometres of main roads were repaired and over 200 kilometres built. In 1937, there were 1,950 kilometres of main roads. Adding by-roads of the first category (4,365 kilometres) and of the second category (9,300 kilometres), there is a total of 15,000 kilometres of roads — that is, roughly 270 kilometres per 1,000 square kilometres and 60 kilometres per 10,000 inhabitants. The farmer, in addition to the main roads and the by-roads of the first and second categories, can use the by-roads of the third category, connecting villages and isolated farms, so that he usually has adequate means of communication and can always take his produce to the nearest markets. Motor-bus services (a means of communication which is rapidly spreading) make travelling fairly easy. The Government proposes to build 700 kilometres of main roads in the next ten years and to develop and improve the system of by-roads.

621 As regards other questions connected with rural planning, it may be noted that the villages are divided up into separate isolated farms (see II), and that, in four or five years time, built-up villages areas will have ceased to exist. Agriculturists who have left their villages to take up farming on these separate undertakings have to dig wells, but this does not, as a rule, present great difficulties, as drinking-water is found nearly 377 everywhere. Electrification has only just started : at present, regional electric power stations are being set up (the source of energy being peat), and the construction of a large central hydro-electric power station is under consideration. It is possible that the problem of the electrification of the country-side may become a matter of pressing concern in the near future : the drawbacks attaching to the system of scattered and isolated farms will then become apparent.

369 For these isolated farms, the school and church, representing the economic and ideological aspects of organised farming interests, serve as cultural and social centres. Together with the Press and the wireless, they correct such dangers as isolated members of the rural community might otherwise be exposed to from a cultural and social point of view.

1. A land reform program divided former common pasture land into separate farms.

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The farm consists of the following separate buildings: the farm-house, a byre or stable, a barn, a loft, a bath-house (at some distance from the house), and a cellar, with a small orchard, a kitchen-garden and a little flower-garden. 342 343

The house, usually of wood, includes a large kitchen, which is also the living-room (grįčia), a large guest-room (seklyčia), one or two small bedrooms, a storeroom, a hall (with one room on either side), and a porch. In the loft (where grain, flour, etc., are stored), one or two bedrooms are often fitted up during the summer. In some districts, a special kitchen is constructed for the summer.

The rooms are about 3 metres high; the air circulates freely through the windows and wooden partitions. The inner walls are whitewashed and the floor is generally of boards. The house is warmed by means of stoves, which are often unpractical, particularly in the older houses.

Nearly every farm has a well, which is kept covered for sanitary reasons.

The privies are generally of a primitive kind, situated at a fair distance from the house.

The animals are kept in byres or stables at some distance from the house, with portions divided off for the smaller farmyard animals; the latter are occasionally housed separately.

A special loft is used to store grain, flour, etc. Cereals and forage are kept in a separate barn, while vegetables and other particularly perishable products are stored in a separate cellar, or in a special cellar under the house.

The farm-houses and out-buildings do as yet not compare with those of farmers in Western Europe. Under the former Russian Government, agriculture remained at a standstill, and rural recovery was precluded. During the war, all the farmers' savings disappeared, and a large number of farms — some 16,000 — were destroyed. These had to be rebuilt, while many new buildings were required in connection with the agrarian reform, thereby adding to the difficulties of rural administration. The development of agriculture and the improvement in rural standards of living make it a matter of urgent necessity that buildings better adapted to the farmers' needs should be erected without delay.

The Government and the agricultural organisations are taking energetic measures to improve rural building: Active propaganda is carried on, farmers are taught how to plan their buildings, so that they may be put to better use, grants are made for the erection of model buildings, prizes are awarded for farms run on rational lines, etc. Quite recently, at the instance of the Government in collaboration with the Chamber of Agriculture, the Lithuanian Society of Engineers and Architects and other institutions and organisations, a long-term plan

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342 was framed to encourage the use of brick and stone for building
343 purposes, as Lithuania is not rich in timber. The plan includes the erection of stone houses for farmers and agricultural labourers and stables and byres, and provision is made for long-term credits to be granted to farmers for the purpose, at reduced rates. Care will be taken, when the plan is carried out, to see that the buildings are rationally constructed, in accordance with economic and sanitary requirements; æsthetic considerations will also be borne in mind.

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Lithuanian landscape.

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AVERAGE DIET (PER DAY) OF THE LITHUANIAN PEASANT (male adult)

Order	Foodstuff	Amounts consumed					Amounts absorbed
		Grammes	Proteins (grammes)	Fats (grammes)	Carbohydrates (grammes)	Calories (gross)	Calories (net)
1.	Rye bread	548.7	35.67	5.49	279.84	1,344.31	1,152.27
2.	Wheat bread	3.1	0.28	0.03	1.43	7.25	6.51
3.	White bread	3.5	0.24	0.02	1.—	9.31	8.4
4.	Wheaten flour	16.—	1.83	0.24	11.36	56.64	48.8
5.	Barley flour	4.8	0.48	0.11	3.5	17.38	14.4
6.	Flour for pancakes	85.6	12.75	1.28	58.21	303.02	267.07
7.	"Kisielius" (a kind of oatmeal)	5.—	0.28	0.16	1.3	8.3	7.2
8.	Barley gruel	28.4	2.84	0.65	20.76	102.81	85.2
9.	Wheat gruel	0.9	0.1	0.01	0.07	3.28	2.7
10.	Thick gruel	10.2	0.57	0.31	2.86	16.83	16.32
11.	"Vedarai" (intestine filled with grated potato, gruel and blood)	1.5	0.11	0.16	0.57	4.19	3.75
12.	Ground groats	0.8	0.09	0.01	0.61	2.52	2.4
13.	Dried peas	20.—	4.6	0.4	10.4	65.2	58.—
14.	Potatoes	1,010.8	21.23	1.01	212.27	970.37	909.7
15.	Cabbage	54.7	0.55	0.27	3.56	15.86	8.—
16.	Beetroot (soup)	27.8	0.28	—	1.95	9.17	8
17.	Beetroot	16.3	0.16	—	1.11	5.38	4.—
18.	Leaf-stalks of beetroot	1.8	0.02	—	0.13	0.36	—
19.	Beetroot leaves	5.9	0.06	—	0.41	1.18	—
20.	Carrots	3.8	0.04	—	0.26	1.56	0.95
21.	Salad	0.9	0.01	traces	0.02	0.11	0.07
22.	Radishes	5.9	0.05	—	0.24	1.18	1.12
23.	Cucumbers	34.7	0.21	—	0.35	2.43	—
24.	Onions	2.5	0.03	—	0.23	1.03	—
25.	Poppy	0.4	0.08	0.16	0.07	1.74	1.21
26.	Mushrooms	7.1	0.36	0.01	0.21	0.41	1.99
27.	"Kisielius" made of cranberry	0.6	0.001	0.0001	0.1	0.42	0.36
28.	Red whortleberry jam	0.6	0.01	—	0.37	1.45	1.42
29.	Strawberry jam	1.2	0.01	—	0.73	2.9	2.84
30.	Apples	9.7	0.01	—	1.36	5.72	3.88
31.	Plums	4.—	0.03	—	0.68	2.92	1.—
32.	Sugar	16.3	—	—	10.29	40.68	40.17
33.	Honey	8.8	0.03	—	7.04	26.4	26.4
34.	Pork (half-lean)	31.2	5.62	6.55	—	83.93	79.56
35.	Pork (lean)	3.2	0.67	0.22	—	4.83	4.48
36.	"Kisielius" (a kind of jelly)	1.6	0.34	0.11	—	2.42	2.24
37.	Pork, mutton, hare	10.2	2.04	0.99	—	17.44	16.49
38.	Bloed soup	7.2	0.61	0.02	0.01	2.66	2.38
39.	Mutton	1.2	0.23	0.03	—	1.69	1.62
40.	Sucking pig	5.6	1.18	0.39	—	8.46	7.84
41.	Ham	4.5	1.13	1.62	—	19.67	18.9
42.	Sausage	0.2	0.06	0.1	—	1.12	1.06
43.	"Skilandis" (the stomach of a pig filled with minced pork)	2.3	0.55	1.06	—	12.1	11.5
44.	Bacon	21.6	3.02	11.02	—	114.48	110.16
45.	Fat	10.3	0.01	10.25	—	95.38	94.76
46.	Linseed oil	0.03	—	0.03	—	0.28	0.28
47.	Fish	11.9	1.19	0.04	—	4.76	4.16
48.	Herrings	4.1	0.57	0.49	—	6.89	6.35
49.	Eggs	2.—	0.28	0.22	0.01	3.24	3.—
50.	Fresh milk	240.2	8.17	8.17	11.29	156.13	151.33
51.	Skim-milk	48.7	1.66	0.05	2.29	16.56	14.61
52.	Curdled milk	193.1	6.37	5.21	5.69	110.07	104.27
53.	Buttermilk	7.6	0.26	0.04	0.36	2.89	2.51
54.	Cream	23.3	0.79	2.33	0.93	28.66	27.96
55.	Butter	10.9	0.06	9.05	0.05	84.67	84.24
56.	Curds	30.3	5.76	0.18	0.7	28.46	25.76
57.	Cream cheese	10.5	3.99	0.21	0.32	19.53	17.53
	Total		127.67	68.7	657.8	3,861.—	3,479.—